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# RICE

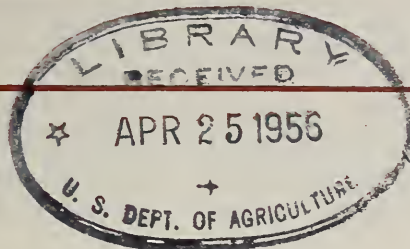
## SPECIAL



September 29 to  
October 8, 1955

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Information

Washington, D. C.  
August 1955



RICE is versatile, economical, and easy-to-use. And rice is plentiful! Because it is, the entire rice industry has come together to conduct an aggressive merchandising campaign this fall, to reach a peak from September 29 to October 8. Growers, millers and distributors are joining the effort to focus special sales attention on rice.

Because of the supply situation and the importance of the crop in the Nation's agriculture, the U. S. Department of Agriculture is actively supporting the industry's campaign — backing it with a Special Plentiful Foods Program during the September 29-October 8 period.

As part of this effort, the Department has compiled this roundup of rice information, especially for you who write copy for consumers, to help you tell them about the current situation.

A PRIME FOOD CROP: Rice has long been the world's staple food; its history traces back more than 5 thousand years. Today, rice is the basic item of diet for more of the world's people than any other food. In many languages of the Orient, "rice" and "food" are synonymous.

In this country, though, rice has traditionally been of less importance than in other world areas. Before World War II, rice was a minor agricultural product here. But, stimulated by war demand, production increased sharply until rice has become a crop valued at some \$270 million annually -- an important source of farm income in many growing areas.

AN INDUSTRY — GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN

GROWTH OF THE U.S. RICE INDUSTRY -- Here is the record:

<u>Crop Year</u>	<u>Acreage Seeded</u>	<u>Average Yield</u>	<u>U.S. Production</u>	<u>Civilian Consumption</u>
1925	853,000 acres	1,743 pounds	14,866,000 cwt	5.1 pounds
1930	966,000 acres	2,093 pounds	20,218,000 cwt	5.7 pounds
1935	817,000 acres	2,173 pounds	17,753,000 cwt	5.3 pounds
1940	1,090,000 acres	2,247 pounds	24,495,000 cwt	5.8 pounds
1945	1,514,000 acres	2,029 pounds	30,718,000 cwt	4.0 pounds
1950	1,636,000 acres	2,369 pounds	38,757,000 cwt	5.7 pounds
1954	2,476,000 acres	2,389 pounds	59,151,000 cwt	5.2 pounds
1955	1,852,000 acres	2,562 pounds	47,440,000 cwt	5.3 pounds

RICE GROWING IN U.S.: Rice is grown in this country in the select area where conditions favor it -- where land is level, climate is warm, and there is plenty of water. Rice reputedly came to this country on a pirate ship wrecked off the Carolina Coast. From there rice culture spread along the coast. Now, it is grown in several States -- principally in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and in California. Rice growing has become a highly-mechanized operation in these areas, as growers use every possible labor-saving device to hold costs down. Typically, much of the seeding and spraying is done by airplane.

THE READJUSTMENT: The sharp increases in production in the United States, through the war years and the years of reconstruction, still ran far short of supplying the world's demands -- even though we sent half our crop into world markets. In 1952, the world's scarcity eased. Acreage was expanded as fighting ended, and all rice-growing areas were favored with unusually good weather. Rice-consuming countries became better able to supply their own needs -- and other surplus-producing countries became more active competitors. By the end of the 1953 marketing year (on August 1, 1954) the unsold "carry-over" of rice in this country had climbed, on a rough basis, to more than 7 million hundredweight. Similar marketing conditions have continued through the past year, while rice production climbed to a record high here. And 1954 exports were down about one-third from 1953. Now, estimates are that the August 1 "carry-over" this year will be about three times as large as last year, setting another all-time record.

THE BALANCE: Supply and demand must be moved into balance. And rice growers have been actively seeking the means to make the adjustment.



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CURTAIN PRODUCTION? One obvious means of balancing the cut-back in demand is to grow less rice. We are doing that now. "Acreage allotments" are in effect, and growers voted in a national referendum (on January 28) to accept marketing quotas on their crop.

Growers have cut their acreage this year by 25 percent, to the lowest level since 1950. However, weather and other growing conditions have been good, yields are near record high, and the full cut in acreage has not been reflected in production. Therefore, the crop is down only 20 percent from last year. This year's rice crop (on the basis of July 1 conditions) is estimated to total 47 million hundredweight, the smallest crop since 1951.

BOOST DEMAND? But many rice industry leaders believe there's another, more promising way to seek the balance between supply and demand. That's to boost demand. They feel the boom in American rice production should be made a boon to American consumers. They point out that American rice is the world's finest. And they believe it will be better appreciated here, if an adequate effort is made to educate consumers to its merits.

CONSUMPTION: Rice consumption has increased over the years in the United States. Last year's use for food was the largest ever recorded. But the increase has only kept pace with the increase in population; on a per-capita basis, consumption is currently only about average (see table).

Within the current nationwide average annual consumption of 5-1/3 pounds per person, use varies widely -- all the way up to 100 pounds in some rice-growing areas of the South. Growers say the generous, imaginative use of rice has done much to build the reputation for fine cooking that's the boast of these regions.

RICE USE: The wide variations in rice consumption over the country reflect the wide variety of possible uses for rice.

- Versatile: Rice lends itself to a greater variety of combinations than any other food. It combines well with meats, fish, milk, cheese, eggs, vegetables and fruits. It can be used in dozens of different ways -- as a main dish, a vegetable, in soups and salads, or as a dessert. It can be cooked separately, to serve with other foods; or cooked mixed with other foods.

- Economical: Rice, like other cereals, is rich in starch. It ranks high among the foods that provide energy at low cost. And its bland flavor makes rice an excellent extender for other foods.
- Easy-to-Use: Rice is now offered in retail stores in many forms. Regular polished white rice has the hull, bran and germ removed. Various "undermilled" rices also are available including brown rice, which has only the hull removed. Brown rice has a nutty flavor and more nutrients than white rice, but doesn't keep as well, and needs longer cooking time. Rice processed in different ways by the manufacturer is also offered. Converted rice is regular white rice with B vitamins and minerals retained. Precooked rice is partially cooked before packaging, thus saving home cooking time.

However you prefer it, rice is quick and easy to prepare -- and following directions assures success in cooking.

CONSUMER PREFERENCES: In a nationwide survey, USDA found that 9 out of 10 homemakers use rice sometimes in their meals. The reasons they gave were, in order of frequency of mention: taste, appeal, usefulness in adding variety to meals, healthful qualities, economy, and ease and speed in preparation.

HARVEST TIME: The fall rice campaign has been timed for the harvest, when rice is most plentiful and at its best. The rice harvest gets under way about the first of August, then increases sharply. Abundant supplies will be available, therefore, to supply markets generously throughout the period of the campaign -- especially during the peak period of September 29-October 8. During this period, weather will be turning cooler, too -- increasing the opportunities for using more rice in more ways.

THE HIGHLIGHTS: Those are the highlights of the rice story, and the reasons the Department is cooperating with the industry's fall consumption campaign. More material is available, from the industry and from the Department.

INFORMATION MATERIALS: The Department has available a publication on "Cooking White Rice". It describes the easy, sure way to cook rice -- then gives a collection of recipes for using it. We'll be glad to send a copy of this booklet to you, free of charge, to help you aid this Special Plentiful Foods Program on rice. Send your request to: Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.





